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Unity Restor'd
TO THE
CHURCH
OF
ENGLAND.

By JOHN MATER, D. D. Minister of
the Church of *Roydon* in the County of *Suffolk*,
and Author of the Exposition of the Church
Chatechism, and the Comentary on the
Old and New Testament, contained
in Six Volumes.

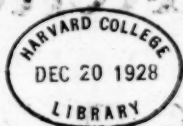
Matth. 5. 9.

*Blessed are the Pease-makers, for they
shall be called the Children of God.*

Psalms 122. 6.

*Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, they
shall prosper that love her.*

L O N D O N,
Printed for *A. Rice*, and are to be sold by
Book-sellers. 1661.



Subscription of 1916

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Unity Record

CHURCH

1852

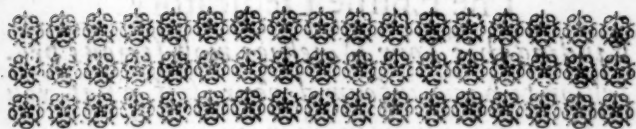
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To the KING's most Excellent Majesty *CHARLES* the Second, of *England, Scotland, France and Ireland* King, Defender of the Faith, &c. Grace and Peace in Jesus Christ.



Most Gracious and dear Sovereign, so soon as I saw Your Majesties Declaration of October 25. I could not but rejoice greatly for Your Care and holy Solitude expressed therein, and wisdom like the wisdom of Solomon about settling unity and uniformity in the Church of England, and devising the means of effecting it. And whereas some have in writing cast aspersions upon Your Sacred person, I could not but be greatly grieved at it, and to see how that notwithstanding

The Epistle Dedicatory.

standing this Your Majesties most serious profession to have inform'd your self what you could by consulting with many both grave and learned beyond Sea, and of your own Land, by what means most probably Unity may be restored to the Churches under your Majesties Dominion, yet may remain unsatisfied, who although they are not reverse from Episcopal Government reformed, yet at hearing of Suffragans and rural Deans, they are much troubled as at Officers not formerly heard of either in the time of Queen Elizabeth, King James Your Grandfather, or of King Charles Your Father. And as for the book of Common Prayer, although the Prayers therein contained are most pithy and pious, yet the multitude of them, and often repetitions of some, &c. are offensive, and above all, the Ceremonies therein prescribed, which they will never abide to see used, although they be not urged upon them, and so the seeds of dissension will still continue in our Churches which will in time spring up again, the peace and unity desired will never be settled: for to settle it must be as but on God, so but one way
under

The Epistle Dedicatory.

under one Vice-gerent of God upon earth, and that must be the best approved of by the word of God, which being so, and Your Majesties gracious inclination such, that you have condescended so far as to consult with some of your own Subjects what way might be best to introduce Unity about matters Ecclesiasticall, which hath been so long wanting. My Humble Suite unto your Majesty is, that You would vouchsafe to cast Your favourable aspect upon this little book, which I a Subject of yours, as loyally affected to your Majesty as any other man, have written in concurrence with Your Majesty in the earnest desire of Unity to be restored to our divided Churches before the comming out of your Pious and Learned Declaration, having no opportunity hitherto to present it to your Royall view; being 78 years of age, and full of grievous Diseases, so as that I cannot Travell.

And in this little Book I hope your Majesty shall see good reason to be inclined to go the way therein pointed out to prevail for the restoring of Unity so much desired, and indeed

The Epistle Dedicatory.

deed so necessary to promote a settled and lasting peace, which God grant unto us under Your Majesty Our Supream Head next unto Christ Jesus. And to this end, that you may live Usque ad miraculum, gloriously reigning upon earth, as you have been miraculously brought to this Throne of Your Fathers, continuing constantly zealous for the propagation of the true Religion to the end of your days, and finally be Crowned in Heaven with a never fading Crown of Glory.

Your Majesties most Humble and
Obedient Subject and dayly
Orator before the Throne
of Grace

JOHN MATER.

How Unity may be restored to the Church of England.



WE having now, by God's singular blessing, Unity restor'd to this our Commonwealth under one Head, in whom, for his gracious disposition, and undoubted right to this Diadem, we all agree: What remains now so much to be desired, as *Unity* in our *Churches*, also? for want of which such bloody dissensions hath been so long amongst us, to the great disgrace of our most true reformed Religion, and to the setting of these three Nations in a most fearfull Combustion.

Upon this consideration therefore, I, though the least able among many of my Brethren, shall endeavour to shew my good will to restore this desirable Unity amongst us. The main differences I suppose at this day, are about Ecclesiastical Government, and the Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayer. For the first, there will not be, I perceive, any great relucting against Episcopal Government, because it hath so ancient, and such pregnant prooffe hereof is brought from holy Scripture, and the practice of the Catholick

*An. Dom. 60.
Jacobus frater
Domini fuit E-
piscopus Hiero-
solymitanus, &
illo interfecto
Simeon Cleo-
pha filius Hie-
ronimus in Ca-
talogo, cap. 23.
Marcus Praeful
Alexandria
an. 67. ibid.
post Petrum li-*

*ni Epist. 2. Rom. an. 70. lib. 3. cap. 3. huic successit annacletus vel Cletus. an. 89.
Crescentius Episcopus Moguntinus an. 72. Euseb. l. 3. c. 4.*

Church ever since the Apostles dayes, and whilst they lived and ordered the Government of the Church of Christ, if we will give any credit to the most ancient and most credible History-Writers touching Church-matters.

But about their election to this high and weighty Office : who are to govern herein ; and what power they ought to have above other Bishops or Presbyters their Brethren ; and what Assistants they ought to use in exercising their power ; and whether by any other means they ought to have power to punish notorious Offenders than by delivering them to Satan, and not by imprisoning, or any pecuniary punishment ; and whether a Bishop may deliver any over to Satan for any other cause but scandalous living, or blaspheming ; and lastly, whether there ought not to be a Bishop in every City, and great Town, that is for the more Churches therein as a City, with the Villages about it, and so large Diocesses to the putting both of Clergy and People to such tedious travell to have their Causes heard.

Acts 1. 23.

First, touching the electing of a Bishop : what better President can there be to follow, than that of the first Assembly of Apostles and Believers, being 120 to chuse one into the room of Judas, who was chosen by praying first, and propounding two known men amongst them, and casting lots ; which was done by the Apostles and the whole congregation of Believers : For let an Election be made any other way, and so Gods blessing cannot go with a Bishop so chosen. Did not the Lord himself at the first ordain twelve, whom

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whom he called Apostles? and are not Bishops
set up to govern in the Church generally held to
be the Apostles Successors; to whom singularly
the Keyes were committed to bind and loose? and
why then should not the chusing of them from time
to time be referred to the Lord? No free Peo-
ple (as all Christians are) be willing to be gover-
ned by any but a Prince of their own electing,
whom they know well, and well approve of to
be preferred to this dignity; and how then can
it be expected, that it should go well with that
Church which hath no hand in the choice of their
Bishop? It was most anciently the Custome of
Christians for the Clergy and People of the Dio-
ceses to chuse their own Bishop; and then were
they reverend as Fathers: neither did this custom
cease till *Anno Dom. 1120.* when Princes began
to take to themselves the right of appointing Bi-
shops in every place; but before this *an. 775.* in
a Synod held at *Rome* consisting of 133 Bishops, to
the Emperor *Charls the Great* was granted the
Electing both of Pope, Archbishops and Bishops,
*Sidebert di-
stinct. 63. A-
sub pena Anathematis,* in the time of Pope *Adrian,*
wherefore it was a corruption that crept into the
Church in time for Kings to appoint Bishops, and
not permit to the Clergy and People a free Ele-
ction, the Lord being earnestly sought unto in this
so weighty a matter, and *in fine* the Election re-
ferred to his Divine Majesty, who only knoweth
the hearts of all men; which if it might be done
at this day, the King reserving to himself the
power of Confirming a Bishop thus chosen, His
Majesty should free himself from being cause of
disquiet.

any corruption in the election, through the Covetousness of his Courtiers, the Church of God within his Dominions should most probably be supplied with none but worthy Bishops, and great unity would every where follow, and all cause of Divisions in these Churches be cut off; but that it may be orderly proceeded to such election, the King is to be sought unto to give leave, without whose leave the Peoples assembling of themselves cannot but be unlawfull: as his Writts must first issue out to chuse Knights of the Shire in every County, and that such leave hath anciently been given, the granting of Congedeletters in times of vacancy to this day do declare, although the man now to be chosen be nominated by the King, and it is in effect no leave to chuse, but to receive him for Bishop whom the King chuseth.

Secondly, for the Bishops power above the Presbyters, his brethren; it is, as *Jerom* saith, only in ordination of Presbyters and Deacons, which cannot be done without the Bishop; for to him singularly the Apostles committed this power, as appeareth by *St. Pauls* writing to *Timothy* and *Titus*, as he himself and *Barnabas* had by the imposition of hands, ordained many; whereas the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery is sometime spoken of: nothing else can here be gathered, but that when the Bishop ordaineth he ought to do it with the assistance of some of his Presbyters laying their hands on together with him, and joyning in Prayer, the Bishop having first examined him that is to be ordained, and accepted

Tit. 1.

Act. 14. 23.

1 Tim. 4. 23.

accepted of him; but forasmuch as the Apostles had the power of binding and loosing also singularly committed unto them, and not the Seventy two sent out to preach, and Bishops elected to govern the Church are their Successors, it is manifest that the power of Excommunicating and Absolving is peculiar to the Bishop also; Wand to such Presbyters to whom he sends out his Processe, to publish it in their particular Churches, as Saint Paul wrote to the Church of *Corinth* to deliver to Satan the Incestuous man, declaring the cause, as it is necessary every Bishop should do to the Rector of every Church.

Again, forasmuch as to *Timothy* Bishop of *Ephesus* St. Paul writeth, not to receive an Accusation against any under two or three witnesses: whereby is implied, that he by vertue of his Apostleship, and power to judge the causes of his Brethren the Presbyters about *Ephesus*, it must needs be granted, that the same power belongeth to every Bishop in his Diocese.

Lastly, because *Timothy* and *Titus* also had power given them to order things in the Churches committed to their Government, for praying and preaching, and stopping the Mouths of ignorant and corrupt Teachers, and wicked livers, whose sins break out after Ordination; it must needs be granted, that Bishops chosen to rule have the like power. Yet when one is called to the weighty Office of Ruling in the Church of God, the duty of Preaching diligently still lieth upon him,

him, and rather more than before; for *Timothy* must not onely be instant in preaching in season and out of season, but also be an example in Doctrine and Conversation.

Thirdly, touching those whom the Bishop is to use as Assistants in exercising his power; I cannot finde any Chancellor, Arch-Deacon, or Official once named in any ancient Writer, but only of Presbyters and Deacons, by whose help they did both ordain and censure, and being assembled in Counsel together make Canons and Constitutions Ecclesiasticall, for which last we have a President *Acts 15.* in the first Council assembling, which consisted of Apostles, Elders, or Presbyters, and Brethren: and for the first in *Pauls* laying on of his hands upon *Timothy*, and the Presbyters in ordaining him, and for the Presbyters assistance in excommunicating, see *1 Cor. 5.* For although the Church only be there written to, yet it is not to be conceived, but that the Church consisted of Presbyters and common Christians, amongst whom what was done cannot be thought to have been done but by Presbyters as the mouth; and there were some Prophets, *1 Cor. 14.* but without Presbyters it could not be.

Fourthly, touching punishment inflicting upon any: The Bishop ought to have no power but spirituall; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, saith the Apostle, but spiritual, *2 Cor. 4.* it is onely such power as Christ committed to his Apostles, and that was onely the power of binding and loosing by excommunicating and absolving, which is indeed a power beyond the power

of the greatest Monarchs in the world, and more to be feared; for if an earthly Judge hath power to send the body of an Offender to Prison, to be kept there by a Goaler, and there to be used most hardly; and after that to condemn him to a bodily death, or to pardon him and set him at liberty again: the power given by Christ to his Apostles and their Successors, is to adjudge to the Prison of Hell, the spirit and soul to be kept by Satan, and by him vexed and terrified with terrors intollerable, and after that to be carried to that Dungeon where there is utter darkness, there to remain in wailing and gnashing of teeth for evermore; and upon serious and hearty repentance to release the sinner again from this grievous judgement if he be humbled, and professeth his penitency without delay: and if we believe our Lord Jesus, that which is done herein by the Bishop according to his direction, is done by God; *For what ye bind, saith he, upon earth, shall be bound in heaven, and what ye loose shall be loosed in heaven* most certainly. Math. 18.

As for any punishment corporall, or pecuniary inflicting, it is proper to him that bears the Sword, Rom. 13. and a Sword-man an Apostle or Bishop must not be, as our Saviour shewed, when he gave Peter a check for drawing his Sword and smiting, *For he that smiteth with the sword shall perish by the sword*; that is, he who is sent out to preach peace.

Fifthly, touching the cause of excommunicating: although this power hath been heretofore used for not appearing at the Bishops Court when
he

he hath been summoned, without any regard to the Calling, or Righteousness of the man; or for money, or to bring in money, which was an abuse intollerable; yet there is no warrant by the Word of God to deliver over to Satan for any cause but scandalous living, or blasphemous Herefie; but for either of these causes there is, as appeareth 1 *Cor.* 5. by the Apostles writing, to have the incestuous person delivered over to Satan, till he repented; and to have all scandalous brethren, Adulterers, Railers, Drunkards, &c. put from amongst them; although *Erasmus* denieth this to be a ground for excommunicating, or putting the scandalous liver from the holy Communion; for although but a Physitian, he would seem to have so much skill in Divinity as to assert, that none, although most wicked, who hold the true faith, may lawfully be put from it, because none such were kept from the Passeeover, but only such as were legally unclean, which uncleanness is now ceased; therefore saith he, none are now to be accounted unclean who are believers, as though if legal uncleanness which was much lesser makes one unclean, but the uncleanness which is by sin doth not much more, whenas that uncleanness which was only outward, of this extending to the very conscience, witnesseth the Apostles saying, to the unclean all things are unclean, yea, the very conscience is defiled; and this is not cleansed but by the blood of Christ, that by the blood of buls & goats. For not keeping from the Passeeover the notoriously wicked by expresse Precept, there may be this Reason yielded: the keeping of the Passeeover

Passover was but a legal Ceremony, and was to be eaten by all that were circumcised, although not circumcised yet in heart, and therefore neither Children nor Fools were debarred therefrom, nor wicked livers, it sufficed that they who did eat hereof were not legally unclean; but the Lords Supper is so holy and separate from prophane use, that *who so eateth and drinketh of it unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*, and this he doth whosoever doth not first examine himself, and finding what a grievous sinner he hath been, sorrows not therefore with Godly sorrow, and confesseth it not, neither is converted therefrom. And if it be so, how can they that rule in the Church, but be accessary to their sin whom they know to be unworthy, but put them not from participating of this holy Ordinance, till that by repentance, and promise of Reformation, they be sanctified, that so holy a thing may not be given but to the holy, at the least so far forth as may be gathered from their own mouths; although we cannot but admit of some unworthy, whose wickedness is conceal'd: but for the commonly known to be prophane, or notoriously wicked; even the Heathen abhorred from having them come to their sacrifices; for one was at such times set to cry thus, *Procul, este prophani*; for excommunicating blasphemous Hereticks we have *S. Paul* for our example, who saith, he delivered *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme, that is, for a chastisement of the blasphemous Heresies which they held, that they

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might

1 Tim. 1. 20

might be made to recant, as is the excommunication of notorious Offenders, that being by Satan terrified, who is now let loose upon them; they may be made to repent, and although they suffer in their bodies this, have their souls saved at the last day; for some then being excommunicated were grievously handled in their bodies by Satan, whereby they were made to know how cruelly they should be tormented in the life to come if they were not made thereby to repent, as we may gather that the incestuous person at *Corinth* was, for that he was so terrified after his excommunication, that he was ready to be swallowed up of despair.

2 Cor. 2.

6. Touching more or fewer Bishops making in this Kingdome; It is not so convenient that their Diocesses should be so large as they have been, because that although in former Ages it might be necessary, when the land was not so populous, to enlarge the limits of Bishopricks, laying many more Towns together, and sometime two Counties to make one Bishoprick, and able Shepherds, of whom Bishops might be made, were more rare; yet now, thanks be to God Christian people having far more encreased in Cities, Townes, and Villages; and Pastors of great ability both to preach and govern, it were much more convenient that there should be more Bishops made in this Land; not onely one to a City and the Villages circumjacent, but to each City-like Town, most Diocesses in *England*, as now they are constituted, being too great a burthen to their Bishops to bear; as *Moses* sometime complained of the burthen of
so

so numerous a Nation laid upon him alone, and therefore desired the help of more Rulers, and had by the Lord added unto him 72, whereby he and the people were more eased, and the better enabled to do the work for which they were raised up.

As Diocesses now are, some belonging to their Charge are so far off, that they cannot know, or ever hear their Bishop preach, although he continueth amongst them many yeares; neither can he know all the Clergy, or their worthiness or unworthiness to encourage or reprove them according to their deserts, and what a trouble and weariness is it to the people to be forced to travel, some of them 30 or 40 miles to have their Causes heard, and to be at the charge to retain Proctors to plead for them, yea, and sometimes *Restores Ecclesiae* also: but if more Diocesses should be made, whence should means be raised to maintain so many Bishops? Even out of the Bishopricks that now are, and Deanaries, and Prebendaries, of which what use is there in the Church of Christ, and of which Antiquity was utterly ignorant?

If it would please God to move the hearts of the Kings Majesty, and the right Honorable and worthy Members of this present Parliament thus to order this great business touching Episcopacy, Oh how easily might each Bishop do his work in his Diocese, by going to preach sometimes in one Church, and sometime in another all over his Diocese, to the stirring up both of Presbyters and People to Godliness! and what love and reverence

rence would it procure in all men toward them, and quell Sects and Factions in the Church, whereas heretofore whilst Bishops sate idly at home, priding themselves in their Lordly greatness, as if they were so advanced to live as the Rich man in the Gospel, when his fruits were encreased; in eating and drinking and making merry, being for zeale to the Truth most cold, but very hot for superstitious ceremonies, comming as near to the Popish Church as they could; they have been hated as the Pope, and despised, and been the occasions of great Schisms and divisions in the Church of Christ, although not so much breaking out as since Episcopacy was put down in these three Kingdomes, but lying before us as fire covered over with Embers. And hitherto of Episcopal Govenment.

For touching Archbishops, I finde no ground at all in the holy Scriptures, and the Bishop of *Rome* was the first that ever took upon him the title of Archbishop, then of Oecumenical Bishop, *anno Dom. 119.* as *Platina* saith, inviting all such as suffered wrong in any place to come unto him, and he would relieve them, and *Higinus* a successor of his spends a great part of one of his Epistles in magnifying the Bishops of *Rome*, as those that are Princes over other Bishops; and so do most of the Bishops of that Sea: and *Marcus Antonius de Dominis*, who was himselfe Archbishop of *Spalato*, in his Book entituled, *De Repub. Christiana* sheweth, that Bishops only are of Apostolical institution, but not Archbishops.

Now

Now to proceed to speak of the book of Common Prayer: That there should be such a book, and thereby an uniform proceeding in all Churches in this Kingdom, I suppose it will be granted on all hands; unless by such as are transported by zeal without knowledge; and *Calvin* himself is for the Ministers using of one and the same form of prayer in the publick place, and his reasons are very good. First, because the prayers and thanksgiving there offered are not the Ministers only, but of the whole Congregation, and therefore ought to be such prayers and praises as the people by continual hearing are well acquainted withall, and ready to say amen unto; whereas if the Minister be permitted to offer up prayers in publick, of his owne conception, he may happily offer up such Petitions sometimes as his own phantasie lea-
 deth him to, that all the people will not say amen unto, and it may not peradventure be good for them to join with him therein, lest by so doing they be drawn in some petitions that tend to Heresie, being for its prevailing; for this being considered of of old by the Council of *Bracca*, a Decree was thereby made against any Ministers using a Prayer in the publick place which was not first seen by the Council and allowed.

The Book of
Common
Prayer.

Secondly, Because every Preacher is not alike guided by the Spirit of God in praying, but some supposing that the excellency of praying lieth in long praying, will draw out their prayers in publick to halfe an houre or an houre, or more, at a time, till all or most of their hearers have their spirits tyred, and have their
 affections

affections made to sag; which if they do, the Ministers praying is nothing to them, but rather is turned into an occasion of offending God, as all saying of prayers without lifting up the heart is: and this long praying is so far from having any ground in Scripture, as that what is written there makes against it, because when Christ taught his Disciples to pray, he prescribed a short form, and condemned long praying in many words and repetitions of the same things as vain babbling, and hereby upbraided the Pharisees hypocritical praying, that they devoured Widows houses, and for a colour made long prayers; and the Preacher saith, *God is in Heaven and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few*: And both *Chrysostom* & *Augustine* are for compendious praying, and not drawing a Prayer out to a great length by using many words; for, to this end *Chrysostom* speaks against those that think to be heard the rather if they make a Prayer consisting of a thousand lines. And *Augustine* adviseth to make short prayers and often, that they who join in prayer with thee may be able to keep their hearts lifted up all the time: and this may serve to beat down the course which now generally takes with the people in most places, that he hath the most excellent gift in prayer that stands longest in making his prayers. Others there are who prefer humane eloquence in praying, and therefore fill their prayers with Flowers of Rhetorick to the pleasing of the ears of the Hearers, which is a way that neither Christ, the Prophets or Apostles have ever gone in, in praying: lastly, some Ministers

Ministers have so poor a faculty in conceiving a Prayer, that they are not able without an help to do this duty in so good a manner as it ought to be done.

Thus to such as will be moved by Reason it is apparent, that there should be in our Churches forms of godly Prayers and Thanksgivings to be commonly used by all Ministers, and sometimes of prayers proper to the present occasion; if there be plague or pestilence, or other infectious diseases in the land; if there be danger by the sword of the enemy, or by Civil Wars; if there be famine or unseasonable weather, too much rain or drought, blasts or mildew, thunder, lightning or tempests, or murrein amongst Cattel, of many of which *Salomon* speaks in his Divine Prayer at the dedication of the Temple which he built.

Touching Prayers commonly to be used every Lords day, they must begin with confession of sins, and praying for pardon and mortification of sin in us, and for faith to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and grace to lead holy and new lives, and for a blessing upon the Word wherein the Congregation is then to be exercised in reading and hearing thereof, that all may give diligent attention unto it, hear it with fear and trembling, and lay it up in their hearts as *Mary* did, and live alwayes in obedience to it in all things: and in praying we must remember all men, the people of all Countries and Nations, such as already hold the true Faith, who are the Church of Christ, that they may be preserved from all their enemies,
and

and established as upon a Rock, against which the gates of Hell may not prevail, but fall as *Dagon* did before the Ark; and such as know not Christ, that they may speedily be converted; and that to this end the true light may rise up unto them, and the Christians who are Idolaters may be undeceived; and turn from deifying of the Bishop of *Rome*, unto us, whom they, for our being against him, count Hereticks; and that the ancient People of God the Jewes may have the vail taken away from their eies, that they may see into the end of the Law; Christ Jesus, and believe, and be saved, as the Apostle *Paul* saith that they shall: then we ought to pray for Kings and Magistrates under whom we live, and for the Ministry of the Word; for all such as are afflicted, whether within our Land or without, that be our brethren, being sorry for their sufferings as for our owne. Thus for publick Prayers;

2 Cor. 3.

1 Tim. 2.

For Thanksgivings, they are also to be made commonly; first, for gracious and godly Kings, when such are set over us, and like Magistrates under them; for the light of the Gospel shining amongst us by the Preachers thereof, beseeching the Lord of the Harvest from time to time to send forth Labourers into his Harvest. We ought also to have Thanksgivings for Rain, and fruitfull Seasons, for deliverance from Plague, Pestilence, or Famine; for Victory over our Enemies, and Cessation of War, which hath been in our Land, and particularly for Women preserved from the great danger of Child-birth, when God hath made them

themable to come again to his house to give him thanks, as we ought to pray for them that are labouring with child, and for such as we have in their dangerous sicknesses prayed for, when they are restored to health again, and if we look into our Book of Common prayer injoynd every Minister to use in his Church under a great penalty, by statute Law made, 10. of *Elizabeth* we shall find therein formed a Common Prayer prescribed in confessing of our sins, and in all the particulars foregoing so pious and effectual as any that can be conceived; that only which can by any that are conscientious be excepted against, is so great a multitude of prayers to the tiring of the spirits, both of the Minister and people, although for the most part they be but short, yet being so many, and some often repeated, the saying of them all cannot but be a wearinesse to most men whose devotion is but weak, and therefore it were to be wished, that his Majesty and his great Council would refer the amending of this fault to some Godly & judicious Divines, in whom there is no prejudice against a reformation herein, as there is in some who are so addicted to our Liturgy as it is, that they say it cannot by all the Divines in *England* be amended, which I grant is true, for the matter and form of these Prayers, but for the multiplicity and repetitions, it must needs be yeilded for the reasons foregoing, that the Book may be amended to the better liking of the whole Nation; for when the reading of all these Prayers was injoynd, there were but few able Preachers in *England*, but abundance

The book of
Common-
Prayer.

dance of Churches and Parishes, to meet thereto offer up their Prayers to Almighty God, and to hear his holy word read and taught, insonmuch as that in most Churches Sermons were seldom preached, but only Divine Service said, and some homily read in the forenoon, and in the afternoon only Divine Service said; wherefore that a competent time might be spent both times, the Liturgy used of old, before the Reformation of Religion, when in most Churches they came only to hear Masse was translated into our mother tongue, that which was Idolatrous being left out, & so appointed to be used in all Churches, with the prayers therein contained, being so good and effectual, could not but be a commendable way for that time, but now thanks be to God, the number of learned and able preachers being greatly increased, who labour almost in every Church, in preaching forenoon and afternoon, it were too great a burthen to enioyne them, the reading of so many prayers, an Epistle and Gospel beside Psalm and Chapters every forenoon; and it would be too great tediousnesse to the people, and wearying of their affections, to the making of them to worship God with their bodies, but not with their spirits, which is vain, for what difference between their praying, that are so long and full of repetitions condemned in Scripture as Phari-
saical, and such a multitude of prayers, and some again repeated, being altogether as long as their own prayer, yea, doth it not come near to the superstitious devotion of the Papiests, who pray upon beads saying a great number of prayers at once?

once? thinking for the great multitude of them to be the more accepted before the Lord, we have no hint given us in Holy Scriptures of multiplying many prayers when we come together in the publick place, but of praying there together, and then spending the greatest part of the time in reading and preaching, the whole time, for the most part, in preaching and expounding the Scriptures. For when at any time *Christ* came into a Synagogue on the Sabbath day, we read of a lecture of the Law, and the Prophets then Read, and then of his Preaching, but of Praying we read nothing at that time, although there was certainly praying also; *for my house*, saith the Lord *shall be called the house of Prayer*: and as he did, so he gave Commission to all his Disciples to do, saying, *Goe and teach all Nations, Baptizing them, &c.* But of saying any prayers before preaching he said nothing, although the Apostles after his Ascension, and other believers assembled together to pray, and they again after the converting of 3000 continued together in teaching, breaking Bread, and prayer, and many other passages there be, which shew that there was Praying in the House of God, as well as preaching. But most time by far was spent in Preaching and Reading, as appears by *Nehemiah* 8. where first it is said, *That Ezra read in the Book of the Law before the people, assembled together, from Morning till Midday.* ver. 3. *Then he prayed, all the people saying Amen.* ver. 6. After which by other *Ministers of the Lord the people were further instructed in it.* ver. 8 All which considered,

Luke 4.

Act. 1. 14.

Against Letany
exceptions

Matt. 23.

who can stand yet for saying so many Prayers at every assembling together, to the house of God, And not acknowledge that the Book of Common Prayer hath need to be corrected, by putting out the repetition of the *Lords Prayer*, after the rehearsing of the *Creed* of the Apostles, and then after the Letany, which is a most excellent and general Prayer for all things and all persons that we should pray for, concluding Morning-prayer with two Prayers only following, and the three prayers for *Good-Friday*, which is for the conversion of *Jews*, *Turks*, and other *Infidels*, the versicles and repeating of the *Lords Prayer* there being left out, and the *Prayer of the Kings Royal Progeny and Bishops, Curates and People*, as being prayed for before in the Letany, and here because some petitions in the Letany are by some excepted against, I will say somewhat in the justification thereof; some except against this, *Remember not Lord our offences, nor the offences of our fore Fathers*. As if in so saying, we pray for the Dead, but they are too captious that make this exception, for the Lord threatneth to visit the sins of the Fathers upon the Children, to the third and fourth Generation, And to the same effect our Lord Jesus threateneth the Jews, to bring all the Righteous Blood that had been shed by their Forefathers upon them; Wherefore we pray only against vengeance, taking upon us for our own sins, or the sins of our Forefathers, against which who but a cavellar can speak.

Secondly, They except against this, *from Fornication and all other deadly sin, Good Lord deliver*

deliver us. As if hereby the Popish Doctrine, that some sins are venial, and some only deadly, were implied, when as the wages of any sin is death, unlesse repented of, and pardoned: But although it be so, yet there are some sins greater then others, of which it is particularly said, that they who do such things shall die, and never enter into the Kingdome of Heaven, of which Fornication is one, wherfore every lesser sin indangereth him that committeth it, in respect of the second death; yet there are some greater sins, whereby the Soul is more indangered, because few of them that live in such great sins, have the grace given them to Repent; we pray therefore to be kept from all sin, but more especially against the greatest, as *David. Psal. 19. 12, 13. Cleanse me from secret faults, and keepe me from presumptuous sins, so shall I be innocent from the great offence,* which is most deadly.

Rom. 6. 23.

Exek. 18.

Gal. 5. 19.

Thirdly, They except against praying against sudden death, for we ought all to be alwaies prepared for Death, and to such as are prepared, it can never be sudden. But seeing no man liveth and sinneth not, who can be alwaies so well prepared as he should be? and who then hath not need to pray this Prayer? And sudden dying is more uncomfortable to friends surviving, and may prevent the setting of our houses in order, which was granted in favour to *Hezekiah*, and the parents blessing of his children before he die, as *Isaac* and *Jacob* did, and their giving instructions to those about them, which commonly are most memorable to the edifying of the hearers

at

at that time , and their own commending of their Souls to God by prayer, and the death of the wicked is sometimes spoken of , as a suddain going down into the pit, as we have heard, that some of them have done, in the very acting of some great sin.

Fourthly , They except against that petition, *That God would preserve all Travelling by land or by Water* ; Whenas by land there are some Theeves travelling, and by water some Pirates & murtherers ; But by saying all , we mean only all that be travelling about their lawfull occasions only.

Fifthly, They except against that, wherein we pray , *That God would have mercy upon all men* ; for which there is a plain place. *1. Tim. 2. Let Prayers and supplications be made for all men,* and a reason added, *that God would that all should be saved*, neither doth it make against our praying thus, that few shall be saved, it is enough for us , that God would not have any perish, but turn from sin and live, and therefore this we must pray for, as we would not be found defective in doing our duty herein by God commanded, and helping what we can , all men towards Salvation, leaving the successe to God ; Some other exceptions also be made against our Book of *Common-Prayer* , as against the Collect of the second Sunday after Trinity Sunday, wherein it is said, *Give unto us that without our prayers dares not presume to ask.* As if there were any thing, that we durst not pray for in the name of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, when as he hath bidden us *aske and*

Excepta-
ken.

and ye shall have; and said, whatsoever ye aske in faith shall be done for you: but the meaning is not, that we dare not for our unworthynesse, if we had not been warranted thereunto by his promise: But thereupon we are made bold to aske the greatest boones in all the World, the pardon of all our sins, and Justification by faith, and Salvation. As for the exception taken to the words of the Prophet Ezek. in the beginning of *Ezek. 18. 21,*
our Divine Service not rightly rendred, but so *22.*
as may make a wicked man bold to go on in his sins till his last sicknesse: At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, I will blot out all his wickednesse out of my remembrance saith the Lord; Whereas the words of the Prophet are, If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is Lawfull and right, he shall hereby live, he shall not die, all his transgressions that he hath committed, shall not be mentioned unto him, in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live: Betwixt which, and the Book of Common-Prayer, there is this great difference, there forgiveness of sin is promised only upon repentance, from the bottom of his heart, which may be understood of hearty sorrow, and no more, when he seeth the Ax ready to be laid to the Root of the tree to cut it down, which Abad did when he saw judgements ready to come down upon him, and Judas also repented and was exceedingly sorry; in the Prophet there is turning from all his sins, and keeping all the Statutes of the Lord, and doing that which is
lawfull

lawfull and right required in him that would not die, but live; of wicked, he must turn righteous, which one being deadly sick, and dying, hath no time now to do, although he be penitent and grieved at his heart for his sins, for if it be in truth, he hath yet but two parts of Repentance in him, which Reprobates may have, as in the two examples foregoing, confession of the mouth, and contrition of the heart; But for want of the third, keeping the statutes of the Lord, and doing contrary to that which he did before; he cannot expect the fulfilling of the promise of Life made to them that do thus; wherefore instead of this beginning it is necessary to set down the very words of the Prophet, that there may be no occasion given to the wicked to think, when they have in the publick place confessed and sorrowed for their sins a while, they are forgiven, and shall be saved, although they turn not from them all, no nor from any, but return as the Dog to his vomit.

And hitherto of that, which I have thought necessary to be considered, and amended, or not, in our common Prayers, and that not without shewing good and solid reason, which ought to bear sway with all that are indued with reason, more than the custome that hath heretofore been when our case was not like to that which now is. As for the Ornaments, as they are called, wherein the Minister is enjoined to read and to use them

Surplice and Cope. *viz.* The Cope and Surplice and Hood, because I hear that they shall no more be enjoined, because of the scandal that

Surplice and
Cope.

that hath been by them in most parts of the land, I will say no more but this, they are truly relicks of Popery; although the Surplice hath been used very anciently, yet not in the first century, but altogether without ground in holy Scripture, which commandeth to do only in the publick worship of God what he prescribeth, without adding, or detracting ought, which holdeth as well under the N. T. as the old, wherein vestments were indeed commanded to be used, by the Priests in their ministration about the Altar, but now under the new, that kind of service being at an end, and a new, which is spiritual, being set up, without peculiar vestments, for which the Minister is left free, as well as other men, what was it but a reducing again of a ceremony antiquated long before into the Evangelical Church, which was proper to the legal, contrary to the Rule given by our Saviour; The true worshippers of God, shall worship him in spirit and in truth: which is not yet so to be understood, as if no regard was to be had to externals, for we must worship God outwardly in the body also, according to that, *O come let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our maker, and a man praying or Prophefying with his head covered,* that is, having his hat on his head, as when he is only amongst his fellowes, for not doing this outward reverence to Christ his head, who is in a special manner present in the congregation, thus reverencing him lesse than the head of the Kingdom where he liveth, *dishonoureth his head:* and for garments to be worn by the Minister in his

Deut. 12. 32.

John 4. 20.

Cor. 11.

his ministration, that which is most decent may be enjoyned, for all things must be done decently and in order, and if by our governours in the Church, a black Gown, which hath been proper to a Minister, be judged most decent, and a peculiar kind of Cloak, whereby he may in all places be known from other men, and revered accordingly, what are any that are inferiours to take exceptions thereto; and likewise if they inhibit the Clergy from wearing long hair, which the Apostle saith is a shame for any man to wear, and require, that they shew no levity, and in their own apparel, by wearing light colours but dark, which shewes gravity; not in following vain fashions of the time, which shewes exceeding great levity, which ought to be reprov'd by the Minister and threatned, as by *Zephany* even in the Kings Children.

Zeph. i. 8.

Reading of
the Scrip-
tures.

For Reading of the holy Scriptures in the Church before preaching, there is something which is justly excepted against. viz. both the appointing of Chapters to be read out of Apocryphal Books, as *Esdras*, the book of *Wisdom* and of *Tobit*, &c. and those not a few, but 60 at the least in the year, wherein they say that the Service book, which now we have, is altered from the first appointed in the year of *Edward 6.* in which were none but canonical Scriptures appointed to be read, and that in all Churches the Ministers are required to read Chapters, both in the Old and New Testament, appointed by the daies of the month, which though it may be well in Churches or Chappels where service is said every day, yet if the Minister in every parochial Church

Church keepeth himself to this order, he shall not in many years, by reading the Chapters appointed for the Lords dayes, read most of the Chapters of the Bible, but passe them over continually. And forasmuch as now there is preaching in every Church of the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, somtimes upon Gospels, & somtimes upon Epistles, this is but an adding of an unnecessary labour, to the wearying of the preacher, before he commeth to his greatest labour. Wherefore His Majesty and the Councel of the Land, in whose power only it is, are to be desired to see these things amended also.

And lastly, because it is an offence to some, & indeed, not so commendable in a Minister to read prayers, & there was not any such thing done in Israel of old, for nothing was read in the congregation but Scripture, and as for praying and praying of God it was don *memoriter*, by the Minister, the saying of the prayers set forth in the Book of *Common Prayer* without book by the Minister would be enjoined, that comming from his spirit immediately, as if they were his own, both he himselfe and the whole Congregation may be the better affected therewith, and such as know not how to pray, by hearing them often so said, may be stirred up to learn them by heart also, and make use of them, or some of them, in private, which how shall they be put on to do, if the Minister himself cannot say them, but by the book: to read a prayer made by others cannot be praying by the spirit, as all praying in the Congregation ought to be; but then may one be said to pray by the spirit, when he hath laid up the

Reading of
Prayers.

Nehc. 8.

prayer to be uttered in his heart, and from thence immediately brings it forth, being affected with it, as if it were of his own conceiving. If it shall be counted sufficient for a Minister to read prayers in the Congregation, when his sight groweth dim, or he cannot see, or the Sky be overcast with darknesse, how shall he be able to go on in praying? if it be said every one hath not so good a memory: I answer, He that giveth himself to praying, upon paines taking shall attain to a memory sufficient for this, and so all Ministers after the example of the Apostles ought to do, or else they are not worthy of the Ministry, as for the praying in the Pulpit, if so much time hath been spent in praying before, it will not be requisite now, for the Preacher to spend much time in praying again, but after a short prayer made for the assistance of Gods holy Spirit, and for a blessing, to fall immediately to the work of preaching, For when Christ preached in the Mount, and in *Nazareth*, we read of spending time in preaching, but not in praying, and likewise of the Apostle *Peters* saying much when the people were assembled together to hear him, by way of preaching only, and of *Paul*: neither do I find that any of the Ancient Doctors of the Church, when they stood up to preach, did otherwise. As for the ten commandments rehearsing every Lords day, in the house of God, to make all the people perfect in them, I hold it most necessary, for if a man must in his own house dayly speak of the Commandements, how much more ought the Minister of God in his houses?

A&. 6.

Matt. 5.
Luke 4.A&. 2.
A&. 10.

Deut. 6.

house? and add together with the people the precatuncle set forth in the end. For the Ministers giving warning to keep divers holy days, which have not most anciently been kept in the Church of God, that is the Saints days, there is ^OSaints days. great need to put down the keeping of all these, both because we do not read of any such days keeping before *anno* 501. which was a time of great Superstition. *Anastasius* being then Bishop of *Rome*, who was a Nestorian Heretick, and caused *Macedonius* Bishop of *Constantinople* to keep the Feasts of *Peter* and *Paul*, which had never been done in the *East* before, as I have shewed in my History of the Church, where I have also proved by good reason, that it was a corrupt Superstition crept into the Church to injoin the keeping of them. First, because working was prohibited poor men upon those days, who can hardly live upon their labour all the six days, when as the Lord alloweth all to work upon all the six dayes, and prohibiteth work only upon the seventh. Secondly, such as are idly disposed, both poor men and Servants, had by this means a Cloak for their Idlenesse, to the great detriment of the Common-wealth, and because Idlenesse giveth advantage to to fleshly lusts which fight against the Soul, the keeping of those days was a letting loose of the reins to wicked mens inordinate affections, that they might run to all excesse of riot, as former experience hath often proved, especially at the Festival time of *Christmas*, when so many dayes together were spent in idlenesse and vanity, and
if

if there were nothing else amisse in keeping these days but idlenesse, when all should work, it were enough to presse to the putting of them down; for that idlenesse is so much condemned in holy Scripture. Thirdly, because they are commanded to be kept holy, by resorting to Church to read and hear the word of God, and to pray, and yet no days are spent so prophanelly, there being no care had but to keep labouring men and Trades-men from the necessary work of their Callings, and if they do their work to punish them, and so the holy day is made but a stale to bring money into the Commissaries Court. Fourthly, It is too great an honor to be given to any but God to call a day after his name, & to keep it in way of honouring them; for this commeth near to the worshipping of the Saints departed, and *Mine honour* (saith the Lord) *will I not give to another*. If it had pleased God that such honour should be given to his Saints, surely something would have been said of it, and days should have been instituted under the old Testament by *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Joseph and Moses, Sammel and David*, &c. and under the new by the Apostles, before that so long a time as five hundred years had passed. Lastly, in other reformed Churches this burden of keeping any holy days besides the Lords days, and some to the honor of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the day of his Nativity without the tale of so many days more added, of his Resurrection, Ascension, and of his sending down of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and the day of his Passion hath

hath been long ago cast off, but not the keeping of the day of the Lords Nativity, as lately hath been done in *England*, when our Divines Assembled at *Westminster* could not find that any days ought to be kept holy but the Lords days, whenas by ancient History it appeareth that the day of the Lords Nativity was kept in the very first Century of years after Christs death; for there it is recorded, that in the year 130 *Nativitatis Domini*, *Telephorus* being Bishop of *Rome*, he amongst other Decrees made this for one, that three Masses should be said, that is, there should be three Communion as upon a most high day, upon the day of the Lords Nativity, one in the Evening when he was born, another in the night, when by Angels from heaven his birth was declared, a third at day light, because the first day of Salvation then began to shine, whereby it is intimated, that our Lords Birth day had been kept before in his Church, no man being to tel how long, whence it may be gathered, that the custom began immediately after his Ascension to Heaven, & now the Solemnity thereof began to be more increased among Christians, but the increasing thereof by keeping 12 days, was not brought in til 400 years after, wherefore upon the reasons before going they may be cut off, and it will be best pleasing to our Lord to keep his day alone by doing duties of Devotion, in Feasting and other expressions of joy, and exercising liberality to the poor, partly upon other days also when that day approacheth. And thus much touching Holy days.

Now to say something touching the Holy Commu-

Of kneeling.

Communion, and the Service appointed about it, the Exhortations to be made to the Communicants before receiving are all very good and Godly if they were not too much tying to the Minister, after his Spirits spent so much before in praying, reading and preaching: and therefore it were to be wished, that all the Service going before might be omitted, as being in effect said before amongst all the people, and one of the Exhortations to prepare to the worthy receiving, and so proceed immediately to that short one, beginning thus, *Ye that do truly and earnestly repent ye of your sins. &c.* to the end, a Psalm being finally sung, as Christ hath given us example, and then *The peace of God which passeth all understanding*, &c. some places of Scripture tending to stir up Charity to the poor, being in conclusion recited, and the Alms gathered. For the gesture of kneeling appointed in receiving, it is a gesture shewing the greatest humility that can be, as is in all reason expected by the Lord when at his hands we receive so great a Blessing: and the Minister at the same instant is praying that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ should preserve us bodies and souls to eternall life. Whereas it is excepted against by some, because at the Institution the Apostles did not kneel but sit, and as it was done then so ought we to do. I answer, this I deny, but what they were commanded to do we ought to do, that is, to take bread, Give thanks, break, and eat it as his body, in remembrance of him, &c. for the gesture sith there is nothing said, we are left to our own liberty therein, and

and the Governours of the Church have power to appoint in what Gesture it shall be done, so that it be according to the generall rule most decent, & such is kneeling for a subject before his Sovereign, conferring some honor upon him, as he doth that hath the honor of Knighthood conferred upon him, & so he that hath the honour of a Doctor conferred upon him by the Vice-Chancellor of the University kneeleth before him to be admitted to it, and a Son before his Father at receiving his Blessing, and why then may not a Christian before Christ his Sovereign Lord offering himself unto him to be received by the hand of his Minister, his Representative. If the practice of the Apostles at the Institution were obligatory to all Christians, *St. Paul* in commemorating the Institution would certainly have made mention of it, as well as of other circumstances, but because he doth not, it is apparent that we are not bound to hold us to the same gesture, and indeed that the Gesture is not material appeareth; for that although at the Institution of the Passeeover, instead whereof the Lords Supper was ordained, standing was appointed, yet Christ with his Disciples did not eat it standing but sitting. If it be objected against kneeling, that is an appearance of evil, that is, of *Artolatria*, the worshipping of the bread of Christs body held in the hands of the Priest, believed by many to be no bread now, but the Lords body, who is to be worshipped. *Ans.* in such as believe so, it is indeed *Artolatria*, that is Idolatry, but for so much as we do not believe it for substance to be any
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Cor. II.

other than bread till sanctified to an holy use, and Christs body only to such as believe it to be so to them when they have received it, nourishing them to eternall life. In our kneeling only for reverence to the Lord when we receive, it cannot carry a shew of Idolatry, although, if when it is carried about, as in the Church of *Rome*, They that fall down upon their knees to it cannot but be guilty of this foul sin, whether they believe it to be Christ or not. Kneeling therefore in recieving by those that are of the same Faith with us cannot be justly accepted against, yet because some weak ones will be scandalized hereby, it may be received standing, as it is in some Reformed Churches, but sitting at the Lords Table is most undecent and unmannerly.

Of baptisn. After the Communion followeth that Service which is to be used in Baptising, in which nothing hath been by the most scrupulous excepted against, but against the requiring God-fathers and God-mothers to answer for them, and in such words as they are bidden to do, and against signing with the sign of the Crosse; for the first, that there should be Sureties for Infants that cannot yet speak for themselves, if they be wise and Godly, and make conscience to do their endeavour when the Children are grown to Understanding, that they may be taught and stirred up to profess and promise for themselves what hath bin promised in their behalf, it cannot but be acknowledged to be good Christian care of the Church whereby it is thus provided: But the questions asked of them would be a little altered thus. First,
Do

Do ye believe in God the Father Almighty? &c. and not dost thou, as if the question were directed to the Child, for this is by many counted ridiculous. Secondly, Do ye desire to have this Child Baptized in this Faith? Thirdly, Do ye cometo undertake, as much as in you shall lye, that this Child shall forsake the Devil? &c. The answer to this last being, we do thus undertake all these things; for if the Children of believing Parents ought to be Baptized (as all the Orthodox have ever held) truly there is great need that some faithfull persons should undertake for them, as hath been said, and help what they can towards the Childrens doing so, as is promised, till they by learning the Catechisme come to answer for themselves. Neither was the name of Anabaptists heard of for the space of 1500 years and upward, where *John Leyden* an ambitious Taylor in the City of *Munster* in *Germany*, aspired by such means after making himself a King, as he did, and by other abominable opinions which he then broached. And for the baptizing of Infants we have this convincing reason grounded upon the word of God, that if Infants under the N. T. who come of Gods people that professe the true faith ought not to be baptized, there is no Sanctifying Ordinance for them, and they are in worse case than the Infants of the Jews, because they had Circumcision, whereby they were sanctified and delivered from the danger of death, to which they were by nature subject, but being circumcised, they were saved if they died in their Infancy: but the Children of

John 3. 5.

1 Peter. 3. 19.

Christians should be altogether without any sanctifying Ordinance, and so continue Children of wrath, as all are by nature, and if they die before they be baptized in danger of being cut off, for unlesse one be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and St. *Peter* saith that baptism is as *Noah's* Ark that saveth, and how absurd is it to say that none can be saved till they they be grown up and attain to actual Faith? for to say they ought not to be baptized til then is in effect to say so. Now that Children born under the N. T. are not in a worse but a better case than they under the Old, appeareth by this, that we have now a better Mediator, and a better High-priest, and a more glorious Ministry; for then *Moses* was the Mediator, *Aaron* the High Priest, and *Moses* had his face covered when he spake to the people: but now the Son of God is Mediator and High Priest, and layeth Heaven open more plainly by his Ministry, and the way for Parents and Children to attain unto it, viz. by baptism, after that the Parent believeth administered both to him and them. If this were not so, what comfort could believing Parents have although they themselves were baptized, but their children not, for fear of their dying unbaptized and unsanctified? for their children are as dear to them as their own souls. If any shall think that they are sanctified by the faith of their Parent, because it is said to believers at *Corinth* *In case but that one Parent were a Believer, otherwise your Children were unclean, but now they*
are

are holy. It is to be understood that the Apostle said so, because that immediately after the Parent was baptized, the children were baptized also, and this is more than probable, because *Origen* who lived about *an. 200* saith, that it was held to be a Tradition of the Apostles that Infants ought to be baptized. Secondly, touching the Crosse in baptism, although it hath been very anciently used, and God hath sometimes wrought miraculously thereby for the confirmation of the Faith, as *Chrysostom* saith, yet for so much as it hath been in time of Popery turned into an Idol by being adored and trusted in, Godly zeal cannot indure it any longer, but as *Hezekiah*, that good King, when the people committed Idolatry with the brazen Serpent, which had been by *Moses* set up, and miraculous cures had been thereby wrought upon such as were stung by the fiery flying Serpents, brake it down, so ought every good Christian King to do by the Crosse, that such an occasion of Superstition being taken away, the like sin may be no more committed. As for Confirmation by the Bishops laying on of his hands in due time upon children that have been baptized, there seemes to be a ground for it, *Heb. 6.* where Imposition of hands is spoken of as one of the principles of the Christian Religion, and that next to the Doctrine of baptism, and therefore it is hereby intimated, that Children which had been baptized were to come when they had attained to the knowledge of that which they were in their Baptism bound unto, to have hands laid upon them by such as
 had

The Crosse.

Laying on of hands.

had power committed unto them, to blesse them, as the Apostles had, that they might receive the Spirit of Grace and Sanctification, as actual believers, as being baptized, and having the Apostles hands laid upon them, received the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues, as is to be seen specially *Acts* 8. where the Samaritans, who believed being baptized by *Philip*, when *Peter* was come, and laid his hands upon them, received the Holy Ghost, but *Philip* had not commission thus to do, and as was said before, Bishops are the Apostles successors, and therefore to them only it seemes that this power was given, and that they ought to goe about in their limits to do this office, and herein the Apostles had Christ for their example, to whom little children were brought, and he blessed them, and required, that it should so be done, saying, *suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, &c.* as being of availe towards the attayning of the kingdome of Heaven, and therefore this is to be believed touching Christs blessing of little children, although they were not then intelligent enough to believe actually, but the Bishops blessing is to be after some knowledge attained unto, as the Apostles laying on of hands was not but upon them that had knowledge, and did profess the true faith, wherefore the Ordinance of confirmation is not to be disallowed, but not to be extolled, as it is in the Church of *Rome*, as a Sacrament, and that not inferiour to Baptism, and as necessary to Salvation, it must needs be granted to be very necessary, because a necessity is hereby put upon parents

rents to teach their children betimes the ten Commandements, the Creed, and the Lords Prayer, &c. and to cause them to come to Church to be examined by the Minister, as is appointed, that the Catechism which is so short being learned by them, they may be blessed, and the work begun about them in their baptism perfected; whereas if this Ordinance of conformation by imposition of hands and Praying be neglected, neither will parents who are ignorant themselves, or were not thus brought up, have any care of teaching or getting their Children taught these things, as by long experience hath proved too true, and so many by Baptism received in their infancy to be Christians, are for ignorance of the Christian Principles like Heathens, differing only from them in this, that they have been baptized, which when they are grown up will avail them no more to Salvation, then circumcision in the flesh did the Jew, that was without the circumcision of the spirit, wherefore let this most ancient custom of the Church be again revived, and Ministers of the Gospel in all Churches streightly enjoined to Catechize as well as to Preach, at the least till the children of their Parishes are made perfect in that so short a Catechism set forth by Authority, and if any ministers mind moveth him to add more questions therunto, he may find above 100 more interlaced in my Catechism put out near 40 years agoe and allowed, and along time by many of my brethren in the Ministry used, till that unhappy confusion came into our Church, and under a pretence of more Reformation, much
more

more deformity came to the face of our fair Mother the Church of *England*, and because Parents are generally most negligent in causing their Children to come to be Catechized, and much more in teaching them at home, it is as necessary to lay some pecuniary mulct upon them if they cause them not, as is upon them, if themselves be absent from the Church; if our higher powers would take this into their serious consideration, and strictly injoyn all Ministers to do their parts in Catechizing, and Parents in teaching and causing their Children to come to be catechized, instead of a most ignorant, we should have a most knowing generation, and where there is any Grace, a more conscionable, to live and do, as with their own mouthes every one shall acknowledge to be his bounden duty, but Bishops diocesses being so large, that they cannot in person go about, to lay their hands upon all, that are instructed, will it not be necessary to make deputies in more remote places, to do it in their stead?

Of Marriage.

Touching the proceedings and service in Matrimony by the Book of *Common Prayer* appointed, these words which the Husband is bidden to say, *with my body I thee worship*, sound so ill, as that most men take exceptions to them, because they may be taken as implying the husbands making a God of his wife, seeing, as Christ saith, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*; To take away this exception therefore, if instead of those words, these might be used, *And I will honour thee as the weaker*

weaker vessel, it would not be without ground in the Holy Scripture, and of the going of the Priest immediately to the Lords Table -----

the persons Married following, and kneeling thereto pray, and to take the Communion, what reason can be yeelded, yea, is there not reason against it, it is a shew of worshipping and praying to the host, as it is called, as to Christ, made of the Bread standing there. Secondly, there is danger of their unworthy receiving, for want of examining themselves before, to which they are then most probably indisposed, as having their hearts then taken up with other pleasures; Wherefore this also would be considered, and no more enjoined, they that are to be married being rather required at some other time before, when there is a Communion, reverently to receive it, being duly prepared.

Now remaineth nothing more to be spoken to in The Visitation of the Sick.

the Book of *Common Prayer*, but the Visitation of the Sick, the Burial of the Dead, and Thanksgiving for women comming to Church after Child-bearing, in all which none other but the good spirit seemeth to have been the guid of such as thus ordered it; and it is pittie that the order for the visitation of the sick is not generally followed, being so Godly and comfortable. And for the burial of the Dead, what can be excepted against, unlesse it be in that prayer, that we, with this our brother, and all other departed in the true faith, may have our perfect consummation and blisse in thine everlasting Kingdome; but they are too quick of apprehension, who say,

Buriall of the Dead.

that this is with the Papists a praying for the dead whenas indeed it is not a praying that they may be saved, but for the hastning of the time of perfecting our Salvation both in Soul and Body ; that is, that the coming of our Lord Jesus may be hastned , when this shall be done, and the person deceased being a Christian, who in the judgement of charity supposing him to be gone to Heaven in his Soul , pray thus for him together with our selves and other believers.

Thanksgiving
for Women.

The thanksgiving for women, and their bringing of an offering after child-bearing, in way of real thankfulness, is grounded upon *Levit.* 12. For although it were a Ceremonial Law, and Ceremonial rites are now done away, yet there was a moral in the same enjoined , which bindeth alwaies, that is to shew thankfulness in the house of God for so great a deliverance, as *Hezekiah* being delivered from his deadly sickness, went up to the house of the Lord , and prayed God.

Isa. 28. 22.

And thus by the help of God I have finished the task undertaken, to shew how unity may be restored to the Church of *England*, in respect of Episcopal Government, and the book of *Common Prayer*, now the God of peace and unity work so in the hearts of his Majesty and Parliament, that it may be so done, and the doubts and Scruples about the Book of *Common-Prayer*, being taken away, as hath been said, the same good God work so in the hearts of all his Ministers, that all contention being laid aside, they may with one heart and one mind, agree to serve God in the publick place in such uniformity , that the Pri-
stine

fine splendor of this our Mother Church through uniformity may be restored, and the foul blemish of differences may be done quite away, to the great comfort of all true hearted Christians, and the glory of God Almighty. And because unity in opinion is no lesse necessary, than uniformity in divine worship, and there be many Sects in the Church of *England* at this day, although it be not possible for the higher powers on Earth by their authority, or for the learned in divine knowledge, to make by their most convincing arguments, all to be of one mind with the Catholick Church reformed: yet there may be some course taken to keep their erronious opinions from spreading further, and their liberty may be so suppressed, as that there may in appearance and *ex professo*, be little or no discord; and this may be by injoyning all under a penalty to be taken off, such as shall afterwards offend, to come duly to their own parish Church, as is by Law required. 2. By not permitting under a greater penalty, private meetings in houses. 3. By stopping the mouthes of their ringleaders and teachers, the punishment of imprisonment, or banishment being laid upon them that will not forbear; for so godly Emperors have dealt with such disturbers of the peace of the Church in times past, & good reason, for as *Elijah* said, if the Lord be God follow him, if *Baal* be he, go after him, it is intollerable that there should be more religions in one Kingdome, than one generally professed therein under one head, because as Religion hath the name *a religando* binding mens hearts together, so permit divers religions, and although in some politick respects,

they may live together in external peace, yet their hearts not being knit together, but separated from one another, this peace cannot alwaies continue, but as there is an opportunity offered break out into bloody dissention, as was proved by woful experience in the Romish Chatholicks in *Ireland*, and Anabaptists in *Germany*, and when in time of peace so great a Massacre was made in *France*, Anno 1573.

To conclude, whereas in this Tract I have made some mention of my History of the World, from the creation to the end of *Nehemiah* his principality, 2. From thence to the destruction of *Jerusalem*. 3. From thence to the Year of our Lord 1648. His Majesty may be pleased to take notice, and all others that delight in the best Histories, that I have by Gods assistance finished this great work divers years agoe, and have it ready to be published, if it might be accepted of, as being next unto the sacred history, most necessarie for all Christians who are studious to read, for the better understanding of the most notable things done in the world, both before the Flood and since in the 4 Monarchies, and other Kingdomes of the world, and of the state of the *Church* of God in those 500 yeares, of which the Holy Scripture saith nothing, and lastly of the government that hath been by Emperours, and Bishops of *Rome*, and Councels, of Heresies, corruptions in Religion, famous Doctors in the Church, and most memorable occurrences in Kingdomes, and miracles wrought to confirm faith, or superstition, true or false.

FINIS.

